of Nepal, 300 ventures with foreign investments from India were registered in Nepal in 2005, involving total foreign investment of approximately Rs. 600 crores. 201 ventures were registered in manufacturing, 32 in hotel and resorts, 8 in construction and 18 in infrastructure-related sector. According to the estimates provided by Government of Nepal, out of these 300 registered ventures, only about 125 were in operation.

(b) and (c) In recent years, Maoist activities and threats have, from time to time, caused temporary disruptions in various business sectors of Nepal. These disruptions have also, *inter alia*, affected Indian enterprises operating in Nepal. There is no reported instance of permanent closure of any major Indian business enterprise in Nepal on account of Maoist threats.

(d) Government attaches the highest importance to the security of Indian citizens and Indian business enterprises in Nepal. Cases involving safety and security of people of Indian origin in Nepal and Indian business enterprises are taken up by the Government of India with the Government of Nepal, including at the highest levels.

Minister's visit to Pakistan

308. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that he had visited Pakistan in January, 2007;

(b) if so, details of the subjects discussed; and

(c) the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Yes. The External Affairs Minister visited Pakistan to convey an invitation from the Prime Minister to the Prime Minister of Pakistan to attend the 14th SAARC Summit to be held in New Delhi in April 2007. Apart from SAARC related issues, he discussed bilateral issues with Pakistani leaders and reviewed the progress in the composite dialogue. The External Affairs Minister invited Pakistan's Foreign Minister to India in February, 2007 for the Joint Commission meeting. They agreed to establish a committee on prisoners comprising retired judges of the

superior judiciary to visit jails in the two countries and propose steps to ensure humane treatment and expedite release of prisoners who have completed their prison terms. They also agreed to hold the first meeting of the joint anti-terrorism mechanism before the end of March, 2007. On Siachen, they agreed that the officials would meet at an early date to address the issue. They agreed to expedite the liberalisation of the visa regime and the agreements on reducing the risk of accidents relating to nuclear weapons, speedy return of inadvertent line crossers and prevention of incidents at sea. They agreed to facilitate the movement of diplomats to Noida and Gurgaon in India and Taxila and Hasan Abdal in Pakistan. On Sir Creek, they agreed that the officials would be directed to expedite the Joint survey. They decided that the fourth round of Composite Dialogue would commence with the meeting of the Foreign Secretaries on 13-14 March, 2007.

Bhutanese refugees on Indo-Nepal border

309. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the anger among lakhs of Bhutanese refugees on Indo-Nepal border could be dangerous for India's security;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether intelligence agencies have also elerted Government in this regard;

(d) if so, the steps Government are taking to tackle the situation; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) The issue of refugees living in camps which are located within the territory of Nepal is a bilateral matter between Nepal and Bhutan. Government of India is aware that Nepal and Bhutan have been discussing ways and means to resolve the problem. Government is committed to taking all necessary steps to safeguard the security interests of the country, including along the border.